

Legal Consequences of Risky Behaviors



ALCOHOL

Since 1945, Missouri's legal drinking age has been 21. It is a misdemeanor for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase (or even attempt to purchase) alcohol, have alcohol in their possession, have a blood alcohol content (BAC) of more than 0.02%, or appear to be intoxicated.

Anyone under 21 who violates any of the above will receive a **Minor in Possession (MIP)**.

- In 2006, Missouri expanded the law to include "Minor in Possession by consumption." This means that a minor who appears intoxicated, or has a BAC above 0.02%, can be charged, even without proof of the minor purchasing or having ever possessed alcohol.
- Depending on the number of offenses, punishments may be fines up to \$1,000 or jail sentences of up to one year. A minor's driver's license will also be suspended anywhere from one month to one year, depending on the number of offenses, even if the minor was not driving at the time. If the minor was behind the wheel, the license would be suspended for 90 days with the first offense, and for one year with the second offense.
- An MIP stays on a minor's record unless it is expunged (removed); this cannot be done until at least one year after the conviction or until the individual turns 21. A guilty plea on a record can show up on background checks and affects opportunities for obtaining jobs, renting an apartment, securing a bank loan, getting into college, and receiving student loans.

FAKE ID'S

Using a fake ID to buy alcohol is a misdemeanor and is punishable by a fine of \$500 for each offense. If the minor created the ID, it is punishable with a fine up to \$1,000 or up to one year in jail.



SOCIAL HOSTING

Social hosting is when adults host parties where alcohol is served on property they own. It is illegal for anyone to knowingly allow a person under 21 to drink or possess alcohol. It is also illegal if no effort is made to stop a minor from drinking. Anyone found guilty of allowing a minor to consume alcohol can be fined up to \$1,000 and sentenced up to one year in jail, depending on the number of offenses.

MARIJUANA

- Marijuana is an unclassified substance. Although marijuana is approved for medicinal use in some states, it is not approved in Missouri.
- In Missouri, possession of any amount of marijuana—even as little as one gram—can be punished by up to one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine. Possession of more than 35 grams is a felony, subject to up to a seven-year prison sentence and a \$5,000 fine. Selling or growing as little as five grams of marijuana is punishable by a sentence of 5 to 15 years in prison and a fine of \$5,000 to \$20,000.
- Having drug paraphernalia in your possession is also a misdemeanor.
- Any drug conviction of a minor may lead to suspension of the minor's license for up to one year, regardless if a vehicle was involved.

For help or information, call NCADA at 314.962.3456 or visit ncada-stl.org

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